IN THE HIGH COURT OF GUJARAT AT AHMEDABAD

SPECIAL CIVIL APPLICATION No 11106 of 2000

For Approval and Signature:

Hon'ble MR.JUSTICE H.K.RATHOD

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1. Whether Reporters of Local Papers may be allowed to see the judgements? : NO

2. To be referred to the Reporter or not? : NO

3. Whether Their Lordships wish to see the fair copy of the judgement? : NO

4. Whether this case involves a substantial question of law as to the interpretation of the Constitution of India, 1950 of any Order made thereunder? : NO

5. Whether it is to be circulated to the Civil Judge? : NO

JITENDRAKUMAR @ CHHOTU PARSHURAMSINGH RAJPUT

Versus

STATE OF GUJARAT

Appearance:

MS DR KACHHAVAH for Petitioner

Mr. DP Joshi, AGP for Respondent No. 1, 2, 3

CORAM : MR.JUSTICE H.K.RATHOD

Date of decision: 25/04/2001

ORAL JUDGEMENT

The present petition is preferred by the petitioner-detenu who has been detained by an order of the Police Commissioner, Surat City dated 31.8.2000 in exercise of powers under sub section (1) of section 3 of the Gujarat Prevention of Anti Social Activities Act,

1985 (hereinafter referred to as "the PASA Act"). The petitioner challenges the impugned order of detention availing the protection under Article 21 and 22 of the Constitution of India and had, therefore, approached this court with this petition under Article 226 of the Constitution of India.

2. In this petition, rule was issued by this court on 15.11.2000 and it was made returnable on 6.12.2000. Since this matter was preferred by the detenu through jail, learned advocate Ms. Kachchhvah was appointed as amicus curiae for the petitioner detenu on 19.10.2000 and the office was directed to furnish one set of xerox copies of all the documents to Ms. Kacchvah and thereafter, in turn, Ms. Kacchvah was directed to file a regular writ petition in this matter. It was also directed that the petitioner detenu be informed that Ms. Kacchvah has been appointed as amicus curiae for his case and he may contact through jailor for necessary instructions to be given to his advocate.

3. The facts of the case are that the impugned order of detention came to be passed by the detaining authority on the ground that the petitioner has been involved in the offences registered against him as per Annexure .1 to the grounds of detention for the offence under section 461, 380, 114, 454, 457 etc. of the Indian Penal Code. The detaining authority recorded subjective satisfaction about the petitioner being a dangerous person as defined under section 2(c) of the PASA Act. The statements of the witnesses whose identity has not been disclosed in exercise of privilege under section 9(2) of the PASA Act, have also been considered by the detaining authority and he, therefore, ultimately came to the conclusion that there is no other remedy but to detain the petitioner under PASA to prevent him from pursuing his illegal and anti social activities.

3. The petitioner has challenged the impugned order of detention on various grounds raised in the petition. However, during the course of hearing of the present petition, Ms. Kacchvah, learned advocate for the petitioner has submitted that there is non application of mind by the detaining authority on the question of considering the possibility of cancellation of bail in the event the petitioner is released on bail. She has further submitted that the petitioner was, in fact, in judicial custody at the time when the impugned order of detention came to be passed. According to her, the petitioner was ordered to be released on bail on his

furnishing bond of Rs. 3,000.00 but in view of his inability to furnish such bond, in fact, the order of his release on bail was not executed. According to her, in view of these facts, there was no urgent threat to the maintenance of public order and there was an option available with the detaining authority to move for cancellation of bail which has been granted by the competent court. This aspect has not been considered by the detaining authority while considering the lesser drastic remedy. Ms. Kacchvah, learned advocate appearing for the petitioner herein has confined arguments to this aspect and has further submitted that in view of the decision taken by a Division Bench of this Court in Letters Patent Appeal No. 1056 of 1999 in Special Civil Application No. 8650 of 1998 on 15.9.1999, there is gross non application of mind on the part of the detaining authority. In that case, the detenues were on bail and the question of getting the bail cancelled was not considered by the detaining authority and the Court held that there is non application of mind. According to her, the case of the petitioner stands on a better footing since the detenu was in judicial custody when the impugned order of detention was passed and, therefore, the authority ought to have considered the possibility of resorting to the remedy of getting the bail cancelled, which has not been done by the detaining authority and, therefore, this petition may be allowed.

4. Mr. D.P. Joshi, the learned Asstt. G.P. appearing for the respondent authority has opposed the present petition. According to him, the decision of this court in the case of Mamad Abbas Jasraya v/s. Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Gujarat, Home Department and others reported in 1994 (2) GLR 1209 will be squarely applicable to the facts of the present case. In the said decision, the detenu was in custody and the Court came to the conclusion that considering the antecedents of the detenu, it was necessary to detain him even while he was in custody. According to Mr. Joshi, in the instant case, the petitioner has been involved in three registered offences as per the grounds of detention and has also been involved in the offences which have not been registered, as per the statements of the secret witnesses and, therefore, the impugned order of detention cannot be said to be vitiated on the ground of non application of mind.

5. Having regard to the facts of the case, there is no dispute about the factual aspect that the petitioner is involved in three offences as aforesaid. It is also not in dispute that when the impugned order of detention

was passed, the petitioner was in judicial custody. In the grounds of detention the detaining authority has considered that in connection with the offences registered against him, the petitioner has been ordered to be released on bail in the sum of Rs. 3000.00 and you may bet released on bail at any time by complying with the conditions incorporated in the order of bail and may continue your activities. The detaining authority has not considered that the proceedings under section 437(5) could be initiated for cancellation of bail. According to my view, non consideration of this lesser drastic remedy has vitiated the subjective satisfaction of the detaining authority.

6. It is true that this Court, in the case of Mamad Abas Jasraya (supra), this Court has observed as under:

> "Now, taking this ratio of the judgment and applying to the facts of the present case, it is clear from the grounds of detention itself that the detaining authority was aware of the fact that the petitioners were in custody. Further, the detaining authority was also aware of the fact that previously, the petitioners had made frequent applications for bail in the lower court and further looking to the nature of the antecedent activity namely illegal importing of such huge quantity of contraband gold would clearly indicate that they would certainly make applications for bail to the higher courts and after their release, they would engage in any such activities and, therefore, it was necessary to detain the petitioners in order to prevent them from engaging in such activities. "

But, at the same time, in a more recent judgment relied upon by Ms. Kacchvah in Letters Patent Appeal Appeal No. 1056 of 1999 in Special Civil Application No. 8650 of 1998 dated 15.9.1999, in case of Yunusbhai Hasanbhai Ghanchi versus District Magistrate, this court, after considering the decision of the division bench of this Court in case of Zubedabibi Rasidkhan Pathan v/s. State of Gujarat and others reported in 36(2) GLR 1134, came to the conclusion that the detaining authority has to consider the question of cancellation of bail. In that case, the detenu was on bail and the authority has not considered the possibility of getting the bail cancelled and the court has, therefore, held that there is non application of mind by the detaining authority.

In the instant case, the detenu is on better

footing. He was in judicial custody at the time when the impugned order of detention came to be passed. In view of the order of bail passed in favour of the detenu, thereafter, there was an option of having resort to section 437 (5) of the Code of Criminal Procedure. The detaining authority therefore could and should have considered the option of having resort to the provisions of section 437 (5) of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Non consideration of such lesser drastic remedy has vitiated the subjective satisfaction of the detaining authority and, therefore, the impugned order of detention is liable to be quashed and set aside on that ground alone.

In case of Ramesh Yadav versus District Magistrate, Ita and others reported in 1985 (4) SCC 232, the apex court has observed as under in paragraph 6 as under:

"6. On a reading of the grounds, particularly the paragraph which we have extracted above, it is clear that the order of detention was passed as the detaining authority was apprehensive that in case the detenu was released on bail, he would again carry on his criminal activities in the area. If the apprehension of the detaining authority was true, the bail application had to be opposed and in case bail was granted, challenge against that order in the higher forum had to be raised. Merely on the ground that an accused in detention as an under trial prisoner was likely to get bail an order of detention under the National Security Act would not ordinarily be passed. We are inclined to agree with counsel for the petitioner that the order of detention in the circumstances is not sustainable and is contrary to the well settled principles indicated by this Court in a series of cases relating to preventive detention. The impugned order has therefore, to be quashed."

Therefore, in the facts and circumstances of the case and also considering the decision of the apex court in case of Ramesh Yadav (supra) as also the decision of the division bench of this court referred to hereinabove, the petition is required to be allowed by quashing the impugned order of detention.

For the reasons recorded hereinabove, the petition succeeds and the same is allowed. The order of

detention dated 31.8.2000 is vitiated and resulted to quash and set aside. The detenu Jitendrakumar alias Chhotu Parshuramsing Rajput who has been detained at the District Prison, Junagadh be set at liberty forthwith if he is not required in any other case. Rule is made absolute accordingly. No order as to costs. Direct Service is Permitted.

25.4.2001. (H.K. Rathod,J.)
Vyas